



## **Network Challenge**

### **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

November 18, 2009

## **A. General**

### ***What is DARPA?***

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) is the central research and development organization for the Department of Defense (DoD). The Agency manages and directs selected basic and applied research and development projects for DoD and pursues research and technology where both risk and payoff are very high and where success may provide dramatic advances for traditional military roles and missions.

### ***What is the DARPA Network Challenge?***

The DARPA Network Challenge is a competition that will explore the roles the Internet and social networking play in the timely communication, wide-area team building, and urgent mobilization required to solve broad-scope, time-critical problems. The Network Challenge winner will be the first individual to submit the locations of 10 8-foot balloons moored at 10 fixed locations in the continental United States. The balloons will be in readily accessible locations and visible from nearby roads.

### ***Will DARPA provide funding to solve this challenge?***

No funding or other monetary assistance is offered.

### ***Will locations be announced once the competition is over?***

Yes, locations will be posted on the event website when the Challenge is finished.

### ***Is it acceptable if my email address, website or other account includes “DARPA” in the name? Can I use the DARPA logo on my website?***

DARPA’s name and logo are registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, so actions that could constitute infringement should be avoided. Participants should also avoid names that might create confusion with respect to official DARPA communications.

### ***Whom should I contact if I have a question regarding the website, the Challenge, or the rules?***

Email [networkchallenge@darpa.mil](mailto:networkchallenge@darpa.mil).

## **B. Eligibility**

### ***Is this competition open to entrants who live outside the United States?***

The event is open to individuals of all ages irrespective of nationality or residency.

Employees of the U.S. Government including spouses and dependents for tax year 2009 are not eligible to participate. DARPA employees and DARPA support contractors and their dependents are also not eligible to participate.

Non-US citizens require a taxpayer identification number (TIN) to receive the prize. A TIN is obtainable upon request from the US Government. Additional information is available on the U.S. Internal Revenue Service website at <http://www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=96287,00.html>.

### ***My wife is a US Government employee. Am I eligible to participate?***

No. Spouses of US Government employees are not eligible to submit entries.

### ***I am a state government employee. Am I eligible to participate?***

Yes. Restrictions apply to Federal employees only.

***I am an employee of the Federal Government. Can I find the balloons and have them submitted by a friend who is not a Government employee?***

Yes. Restrictions apply only to entrants, not to the individuals with whom they collaborate.

### **C. Participation**

***Do I have to register to participate?***

Yes. Participants register on the DARPA Network Challenge website

<http://www.darpa.mil/networkchallenge> before they enter their information. Registration will open on December 1, 2009. Registrants must have a working email address to complete the registration process.

***How long do I have to find the 10 balloons?***

The balloons will only be visible during daylight hours on Saturday, December 5. You and your collaborators will have approximately 9 days, until 12:00 PM (ET) on December 14, 2009, to collect the locations of any balloons you didn't spot, and submit your entry.

***Can individuals be on more than one team?***

Yes. Individuals are free to participate as teams or other organizations without limitation. Each team needs to select one individual as the official entrant to enter the results and cash the prize check.

***How can I distinguish an authentic DARPA balloon from an imposter?***

More information will be released closer to the balloon launch date to address the possibility that non-DARPA balloons may create confusion. The DARPA officials accompanying the balloon will have credentials to verify their identities.

***Will all balloon locations be accessible by car?***

All balloon locations will allow participants to see the balloons from a roadway. DARPA has no intent to keep the locations a secret, so balloons will be in public areas with pedestrian access. Entrants are welcome to approach the officials accompanying the balloon to verify that it is associated with DARPA.

***How do I enter the location of a balloon?***

The balloon latitude and longitude coordinates are entered in degree-minute-second (DD-MM-SS) format. Coordinates must have an error of less than 1.0 mile to be accepted. Street addresses and degree decimal formats can be converted to latitude and longitude using Internet conversion tools. (See Wikipedia for a further explanation and references to conversion tools.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geographic\\_coordinate\\_system](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geographic_coordinate_system).)

***Is the longitude entered as a negative number?***

In some coordinate representations, points in the western hemisphere are associated with a negative value for the longitude. For purposes of the DARPA Network Challenge, all locations are assumed to be in the western hemisphere so a negative sign should not be entered.

***How does DARPA calculate the error of an entry?***

DARPA will use a spherical model for the Earth to compute the distance between the exact location and the entered location. The Haversine formula ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haversine\\_formula](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haversine_formula)) will be used with an assumed Earth radius of 3959.0 miles.

***What if the website doesn't work, or seems to be responding slowly?***

Registered participants may use email to [networkchallenge@darpa.mil](mailto:networkchallenge@darpa.mil) in case of technical difficulties, or to provide a secure backup. The email should include the name, address, email address, telephone number, and balloon locations in the specified format. Partial results (fewer than 10 balloons) may be submitted, but each submission should include all the balloons located so far. Mass email entry approaches will not be accepted.

***When will the balloons go up?***

All balloons are scheduled to go on display at all locations at 10:00 AM (ET) until approximately 4:00 PM (local time) on Saturday, December 5, 2009. The launches will occur simultaneously across the country. Balloons will come down at approximately 4:00 PM.

Should weather or technical difficulties arise with the balloons during the day, the display at an individual location may be delayed until Sunday, December 6, 2009, or later, depending on conditions.

***Will the balloons fly for 3 hours longer in the Pacific time zone than in the Eastern time zone?***

Yes, the balloons will fly for approximately 6 hours on the East Coast and 9 hours on the West Coast.

***Is there a minimum height at which the balloons will be displayed?***

Although no minimum height is stipulated in the rules, the objective is for the balloons to be visible. The exact height will depend on nearby trees and wires, weather, etc.

***Can you clarify the phrase "balloons will be in public areas"? Is a public area one controlled by a government entity (like a public park) or could it also include one controlled by a private entity which grants the public access (like a shopping center parking lot)?***

For purposes of the DARPA Network Challenge, "public areas" are areas with public access, not necessarily public ownership.

***Can an entrant submit more than 10 locations?***

An entrant may submit 10 entries on the web form per registration. An entrant may register more than once. The registration process is designed to prevent automated approaches designed to systematically guess the correct locations.

***Are automated entries allowed?***

Automated entries are discouraged. An entrant may register once per valid email address, and the address must be valid to complete the registration process. After the locations in the entry form have been modified 20 times, answers become final and no additional modifications will be accepted.

***Are email entries allowed?***

Email entries are allowed, although primarily considered a backup for web entry. The number of email entries that will be accepted from an email address will be limited to discourage automated approaches.

***When will the winner be announced?***

A winner will be announced after DARPA receives and validates the winning entry, not necessarily the same day that the winning entry is received. Incorrect entries will not be acknowledged.

## **D. Prizes**

### ***What if no one finds 10 balloons?***

If all 10 balloons are not submitted by a single entrant, DARPA may still award a prize if at least five are submitted by one entrant.

### ***What happens if there is a tie?***

In the event of a tie, the award will be divided equally. All other obligations for the winning participant apply.

### ***May an individual represent a large organization and distribute prize money to the team?***

Yes, and the individual may spend the award money as he/she wishes.

### ***I want the prize money paid to my limited liability company rather than paid to me personally. Is this possible?***

As of November 18, 2009, the rules state that the prize winner specifies the recipient bank account for the \$40,000 prize. The bank account may be held in the name of the winner, but could also be held in the name of an organization, a corporation, or an individual who is not the prize winner. The winner should discuss the tax consequences of doing this with a tax attorney.